

“NEIGHBORHOODS THAT WORK”

Award Recipients, 2001

Ward 4 – Maureen Kane

Category 1: Casa Blanca Community Action Group (Chair: Jenny Rivera; John Garcia, Vice Chair; Mike Garcia, Secretary)

The Casa Blanca Community Action Group was formed in the 1970's to increase communication between local government and the police with Casa Blanca and to establish community leadership and a voice for the neighborhood. Since then, they have met monthly at the Villegas Community Center. At these meetings the group hears reports from the police department, park and recreation department, the Home of Neighborly Services, and the Project Area Committee. The CAG provides a monthly forum for residents to bring issues to the table for discussion. In addition, City Hall and others outside of the community have a place to come when they want to share information or need community input in local issues. The Casa Blanca Community Action Group has a far-reaching effect on the community.

Category 2: Yorkshire Heights Neighborhood Association (Chair: Gus Atwell)

Yorkshire Heights Neighborhood Association was formed in July of 2001 in response to two neighborhood issues that had come to the attention of several residents: One issue was a board and care home in the neighborhood and the other was an incident involving a suspicious vehicle that had approached a child.

The neighbors decided it was time to form a Neighborhood Watch, and they organized their first meeting inviting their councilperson and the Office of Neighborhoods to join them at the RPD storefront that services their neighborhood. Since that first meeting, the neighbors have formed an active neighborhood association, their group-home issue has been resolved, they participated in National Night Out last August, and have organized block parties. The neighborhood now meets regularly to discuss and prioritize issues, hear from guest speakers, and strategize solutions that will maintain and improve the quality of life in the neighborhood. They have made new friends with each other and with City Hall. Neighbors now know one another, and a sense of community has been established.

Category 3: Crossroads Neighborhood Association (Chair: Ranela Vallejo)

Former Los Angeles County residents Richard and Margaret Burns chose Riverside's Orangecrest neighborhood as the community that they wanted to retire in. After moving into their new surroundings in a new city, they quickly became the “Mom and Pop” in a neighborhood full of young families. Richard and Margaret have been instrumental in turning their neighborhood into a “family.” As a neighborhood they have organizing fantastic annual block parties which have served to link up neighbors. Richard and a neighbor Ranela Vallego brought neighbors together and established the Crossroads Neighborhood Association. The group has met to plan events and discuss neighborhood issues.